

**City of Kerrville
Parks & Recreation Department
Aquatics Division**



SWIM LESSONS

PARENT HANDBOOK

Program Overview

The mission of our Learn-to-Swim program is to promote independence and confidence for every student. Learning to swim is an essential skill that all children should eventually learn. This program is designed to be taken progressively. Each level is a stepping stone to the next level. Skipping levels may result in incomplete knowledge and skill level. When a child achieves a certain level of comfort in the water it will increase their overall self esteem and confidence. This process is a joint effort between the instructor and the parent and they are both crucial to the success of each student. All of our instructors are Ellis & Associates Licensed Lifeguards.

Contact Information

Please feel free to contact us about our swim lessons program.

Pool Managers
Olympic Pool
601 Olympic Drive
(830) 896.8816

Parks and Recreation Department
2385 Bandera Hwy (Kerrville-Schreiner Park)
Kerrville, Texas 78028
(830) 257.7300
kerrville.schreinerpark@kerrvilletx.gov
www.kerrvilletx.gov



WARNING!! Important Information WARNING!!



- A certificate from any one of our classes does not ensure against drowning!
- Panic is the major cause of drowning and even a good swimmer can panic.
- Parents should actively watch children at a pool or wading pool at all times, even when there is a lifeguard on duty. Parents know their child's ability level and can spot a problem more quickly than a lifeguard.
- Never assume that a child is safe in any sort of water toy including rings, floats, noodles, and kickboards. The child may lose control of the float and find themselves too far from the side of the pool or in danger's way.



Your feedback is important to us!

We would appreciate your comments on our programs, instructors, and facilities. We continually strive to improve so we can offer the best possible program. Surveys will be distributed every session and can be turned into the Aquatics Management.

Schedule

There will be three 2 week sessions offered this summer and we encourage children to participate in as many as possible, especially if this is their first summer of swim lessons. All sessions will run Tuesday-Friday. On the first day of class, each student will be assessed to determine if they are in the appropriate level. A progress report will be issued on the fourth day of class to show what skills each student has mastered and which areas need improvement. On the final day of class, every student will receive a completion card and if passed, a certificate.

About our Facility

Our facility is comprised of a baby pool and a 25 yard X 50 meter Olympic Pool. There are a number of opportunities that the City of Kerrville has to offer and we encourage you to take full advantage of them. Visit www.kerrvilletx.gov to learn more information about the activities we offer.

Registration



Registration begins May 1st each year at the Parks and Recreation Headquarters, so remember to register as soon as possible because space is always limited. Online registration is also available at our website. Waivers must be submitted to the Parks & Recreation Headquarters *prior* to the start of class. Listed below are some important things to remember about registration.

- Classes may be combined or cancelled if the minimum number of students enrolled is not met.
- If your child has special needs, please inform staff when you register.
- If your child has a medical condition, please submit a medical clearance to the Parks and Recreation Department upon registration.
- All fees must be paid in full at the time of registration.
- Online registrations are considered as electronic signatures for the waiver.
- There are no full refunds so please double check the classes that you sign up for.

Policies

Cancellations / Refunds

Pre-session cancellations, refunds and / or transfers must be requested in writing with the Parks & Recreation Headquarters two (2) weeks prior to the first day of the session. We must have adequate time to prepare for necessary instructor assignments based upon attendance. No refunds will be given for less than two (2) weeks notice. You may choose one of these refund options if you cancel in writing within the two (2) week time period:



- Transfer your registration fee to another program, pending availability
- Request a refund of your registration fee minus a \$10.00 processing fee per program per participant.

E-mail cancellations to kerrville.schreinerpark@kerrvilletx.gov

Medical - A doctor's note is required for a refund (minus the \$10 processing fee) due to extended illness or medical reasons.

Level Transfers - Suggestions for correct levels will be done to the best of our and the parents ability at the time of registration, however, there may be times when an Instructor recommends that a participant be moved up or down a level based on their swimming abilities. Level transfers are for the best interest of the participant to ensure that they are in the correct class for their swimming abilities and to help them get the best out of swim lessons. Instructors and / or management will consult with parents / guardians prior to moving the participant; however, participants will not be allowed to stay in a level that is too advanced for them. Refunds will not be given for incorrect level placement at registration.

Weather Policy / Pool Closures

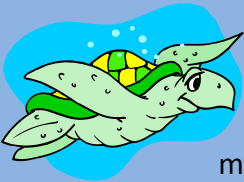


For safety reasons, there may be times when the facility must be closed and cleared due to bad weather or other conditions. The facility will re-open when the weather is safe (the bottom of the pool is clearly visible, thunder is no longer heard, and lightning is no longer seen).

- Closing for rain** (this consists of heavy rain - where the lifeguards cannot see the bottom of the pool clearly), is up to the discretion of the Manager on Duty.
- Closure for thunder and lightning** is necessary. The facility will be closed 30 minutes from every time thunder is heard or lightning is seen. If the inclement weather continues, the facility may be closed for the remainder of the day at the discretion of the Parks and Recreation Department. Only if the facility is closed for the remainder of the day will Rain Checks be issued.

- c. **If mechanical problems occur**, the pool will be closed. If the pH and / or chlorine are not in range, or if there is poor visibility, it will be grounds for closure.
- d. **RWI (recreation water illnesses)**, for health reasons, the pool will need to be closed and treated if fecal contamination occurs.

Make-ups



Living in Texas, we are all aware that weather is unpredictable and cancellations happen ever so often. If we experience any type of mechanical problem in which impedes pool operations, we will have to close the pool and adjust the swim lessons schedule. We will try our best to inform you 30 minutes prior to any cancellation, so please make sure that we have your best contact phone number upon registration. Also, if there is bad weather (rain, thunder, lightning, etc.) please call the Olympic Pool and / or Parks and Recreation Department to determine the status of the facility and / or lessons. Also, please check our website for updates at www.kerrvilletx.gov.

Cancelled classes will be held on Mondays and / or time may be added to classes to accommodate any lost class time. Furthermore, absences or tardiness are not subject to makeup classes. For the benefit of your child and the class, please make sure that your child is on time to each class.

Viewing Lessons

As stated earlier, swim lessons will promote independence and confidence. Children will usually have difficulty breaking away from their parents for the first time in the water. Attaining the trust of the instructor will be vital to the success of each student and this will be impossible unless there is separation throughout the lessons. Parents are permitted to console their children if they happen to become upset, disruptive or to take the child to the restroom. Otherwise, parents, family and friends are to stay in the designated viewing areas (the lobby, large pavilion, or picnic areas) and refrain from being on the pool deck unless absolutely necessary. Family and friends are not allowed in the pool at any time while lessons are in progress. Participants are not allowed in the water unless their lesson is in progress; this includes the baby pool and pre and post lesson. For the pre-school classes, if the Instructor feels that the child would best benefit from the class with a parent present, the Instructor will ask the parent to be present in the water until the child is ready to move on without a parent in the water.



Restroom Policy

Children 5 and under will be escorted to the restroom during class time if a parent / guardian is unavailable take them. Children 6 years and older will be allowed to go by themselves. Please encourage your child to go the bathroom before class begins.

Conduct

We reserve the right to remove children from classes if they are disruptive, verbally or physically abusive to other students or instructors. No refunds will be given.

Completion Certificate



Each participant that successfully completes a level will receive a completion certificate. If your child does not receive a completion certificate, feel free to speak with the Swim Instructor on the skills your child needs to master before moving on. Exit skills requirements for passing the levels are located later in this handbook.

Teamwork

For every student to succeed, it will take more than the effort from the Swim Instructor. The parent plays a significant role in their child's swim lesson. Listed below are several pointers to help your child with swim lessons.



- **Prepare your child for swim lessons** by explaining exactly what will be happening. Try to bring your child to the pool in advance so that they are more familiar with the area.
- **Be prompt** so that your child is not rushed. Children can get anxious if rushed.
- **Follow rules and regulations.** You are responsible for your child's actions, not the instructor or lifeguard. Teach, talk about, and review the pool rules with your child and lead by example. Rules are posted in the lobby and near the diving boards.
- **Attend every lesson** so that they do not regress or feel behind the other students.
- **Complete all the levels** so that your child has the safety skills to be safe in the water.
- **Be patient**, because pressuring your child could cause a regression or even a fear of the water.
- **Avoid comparisons.** No two children develop at the same rate. Each child learns at a different pace depending on factors such as physical growth, individual development, comfort, practice, and previous experience. Respect your child's qualities and do not compare them to their siblings or other children.
- **Always be encouraging and positive** of your child's efforts because it will make them try harder during their next lesson or free swim.
- **Try to practice and reinforce** what your children have learned in swim lessons so that they will have a better chance of moving on to the next level.

****information provided by the American Red Cross****



Things to Remember...

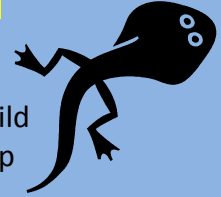
- Students should be ready to swim when they arrive for swim lessons.
- Remind your child of the facility rules. They are posted at the facility.
- Apply sunscreen to your child.
- Make sure that your child has gone to the restroom before the lesson begins.
- Swim diapers must be worn by diaper-wearing participants.
- Gum and candy are not permitted.
- Goggles are not permitted.
- Long hair should be tied back as not to impede vision.
- Participants must wear a swim suit / swim attire. Shirts and pants are not allowed as they restrict swimming abilities. Swim shirts, wetsuits, etc. are okay.
- Admission must be purchased for open swim during operational hours.
- Participants are not allowed in the water until lessons begin.
- Please stay in the designated viewing areas.
- This program is designed to be taken progressively. Each level is a stepping stone to the next level. Skipping levels may result in incomplete knowledge and skill level.
- Feel free to speak with the instructor about your child(ren) as often as you like.
- Have fun!

Level Goals & Objectives

Note: It is important to note that these are goals and objectives for the levels. Instruction may vary depending on the class ability level and it may take several sessions for participants to complete a level. Exit skills must be successfully completed in order to pass the level.

PARENT & CHILD AQUATICS (TADPOLES): Ages 6 months – 2 years

This class familiarizes young children to the water and prepares them to learn to swim in the Red Cross program. It is not designed for children to become good swimmers or survive in the water on their own. Parent and Child Aquatics gives parents safety information and teaches techniques to help orient their children to the water. It also provides direction regarding how to supervise water activities in a responsible manner. These courses are a bonding experience that will fill instructors, parents and children with wonderful lifelong memories.



Skills Taught:

- ❖ Getting wet with toys
- ❖ Getting wet kicking
- ❖ Enter water by lifting in
- ❖ Enter water by walking in
- ❖ Out-of-water exploration
- ❖ In-water exploration
- ❖ Exit by lifting out
- ❖ Exit water by walking out
- ❖ Blowing bubbles with mouth and nose submerged
- ❖ Underwater exploration
- ❖ Submerging mouth, nose and eyes
- ❖ Front float
- ❖ Front glide
- ❖ Back float
- ❖ Back glide
- ❖ Roll from front to back
- ❖ Roll from back to front
- ❖ Passing from instructor to parent
- ❖ Leg action on front
- ❖ Leg action on back
- ❖ Safety topics

PRE-SCHOOL LEVEL 2 (SEAHORSES): Ages 3 – 4 years

The primary objective of Pre-school Aquatics is to promote the developmentally appropriate learning of fundamental water safety and aquatic skills by young children. Skills are grouped into aquatic and water safety categories in the following way: water entry and exit, breath control and submerging, buoyancy, changing direction and position, treading, swim on front and back, and water safety.



Skills Taught:

- ❖ Enter water by using ladder, steps, side and stepping in shoulder-deep water
- ❖ Exit water using ladder, steps or side in chest-deep water
- ❖ Blowing bubbles through mouth and nose
- ❖ Bobbing
- ❖ Submerging mouth, nose and eyes
- ❖ Opening eyes under water and retrieving submerged objects in chest-deep water
- ❖ Front float
- ❖ Front glide
- ❖ Recover from a front float or glide to a vertical position
- ❖ Back float
- ❖ Back glide
- ❖ Recover from a back float or glide to a vertical position
- ❖ Roll from front to back
- ❖ Roll from back to front
- ❖ Treading using arm and leg actions in shoulder-deep water
- ❖ Combined arm and leg actions on front
- ❖ Finning arm action on back
- ❖ Combined arm and leg actions on back
- ❖ Safety topics

Exit Skills Assessments: (All Pre-School Aquatics skills can be performed with support)

1. Glide on front at least 2 body lengths, roll to back, float on back for 5 seconds then recover to a vertical position.
2. Glide on back for at least 2 body lengths, roll to front, float for 5 seconds then recover to a vertical position.
3. Swim using combined arm and leg actions on front for 3 body lengths, roll to back, float for 5 seconds, roll to front then continue swimming on front for 3 body lengths.



Learn-to-Swim Level 1 (Guppies): Introduction to Water Skills. Ages 5yrs+

The objectives of Level 1 are to learn basic personal water safety information and skills, to help participants feel comfortable in the water and to enjoy the water safely.

Skills Taught:

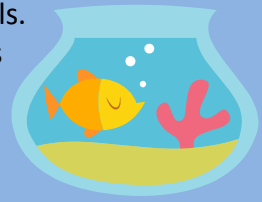
- ❖ Enter and exit the water safely
- ❖ Submerge face
- ❖ Blow bubbles through mouth and nose
- ❖ Bobbing
- ❖ Retrieve a submerged object with support
- ❖ Front float
- ❖ Recover from a front float to a standing position with support
- ❖ Back float
- ❖ Recover from a back float to a standing position with support
- ❖ Treading water using arms and legs
- ❖ Roll over from back to back
- ❖ Roll over from back to front
- ❖ Alternating and simultaneous leg action on front and back
- ❖ Alternating and simultaneous arm action on front and back
- ❖ Combined arm and leg actions on front and back
- ❖ Safety Topics

Exit Skills Assessments:

1. Enter independently, using either steps or side, travel at least 5 yards, bob 3 times then safely exit the water. (Participants can walk, move along the gutter, or “swim”).
2. Glide on front at least 2 body lengths, roll to a back float for 3 seconds and recover to a vertical position. (This part of the assessment can be performed with support).
3. Swim using combined arm and leg actions on front for 3 body lengths, roll to back, float for 5 seconds, roll to front then continue swimming on front for 3 body lengths.

Learn-to-Swim Level 2 (Goldfish): Fundamental Aquatic Skills. Ages 6yrs+

The objective of Level 2 is to give participants success with fundamental skills. Participants learn to float without support and to recover to a vertical position. This level marks the beginning of true locomotion skills. Participants further develop simultaneous and alternating arm and leg actions on the front and back that lay the foundation for future strokes.



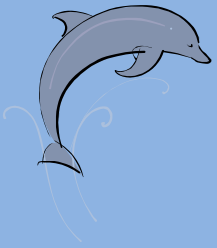
- ❖ Enter water by stepping or jumping in
- ❖ Exit using ladder, steps, or side
- ❖ Bobbing
- ❖ Front Float
- ❖ Jellyfish Float
- ❖ Tuck Float
- ❖ Front Glide
- ❖ Recover from a front float or glide to a vertical position
- ❖ Back Float
- ❖ Back Glide
- ❖ Recover from a back float or glide to a vertical position
- ❖ Change direction of travel while swimming on front or back
- ❖ Treading water using arm and leg actions in shoulder deep water
- ❖ Combined arm and leg actions on front
- ❖ Finning arm action on back
- ❖ Combined arm and leg actions on back
- ❖ Safety Topics

Exit Skills Assessments:

1. Step from side into chest-deep water, move into a front float for 5 seconds, roll to back, float for 5 seconds then return to a vertical position.
2. Move into a back float for 5 seconds, roll to front then recover to a vertical position.
3. Push off and swim using combined arm and leg actions on front for 5 body lengths, roll to back, float for 15 seconds, roll to the front then continue swimming for 5 body lengths. (Instructor can assist the participant when taking a breath).

Learn-to-Swim Level 3 (Dolphins): Stroke Development. Ages 6yrs+

The objective of Level 3 is to build on previously learned skills by providing additional guided practice. Participants are taught to survival float, swim the front crawl and elementary backstroke; introduction of the scissors and dolphins kicks and build on the fundamentals of treading water. Participants will also learn rules for headfirst entries and begin to learn to enter the water headfirst from a seated position at poolside in a depth of 9 feet or deeper.



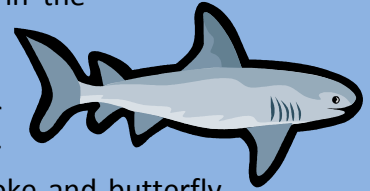
- ❖ Enter water by jumping from side into deep water
- ❖ Headfirst entry from the side in a sitting position
- ❖ Headfirst entry from the side in a kneeling position
- ❖ Bobbing while moving towards safety in chest-deep water
- ❖ Rotary breathing
- ❖ Survival float on front in deep water
- ❖ Back float in deep water
- ❖ Change from vertical to horizontal position on front in deep water
- ❖ Change from vertical to horizontal position on back in deep water
- ❖ Tread water in deep water
- ❖ Push off in a streamlined position on front then begin flutter kicking
- ❖ Push off in a streamlined position on front then begin dolphin kicking
- ❖ Front crawl
- ❖ Elementary backstroke
- ❖ Scissors kick
- ❖ Safety topics

Exit Skills Assessment:

1. Jump into deep water from the side, swim front crawl for 15 yards, maintain position by treading or floating for 30 seconds and swim elementary backstroke for 15 yards.

Learn-to-Swim Level 4 (Sharks): Stroke Improvement. Ages 6yrs+


The objectives of Level 4 are to develop participant's confidence in the strokes learned thus far and to improve other aquatic skills. Participants improve their skills and increase their endurance by swimming familiar strokes (front crawl, elementary backstroke) for greater distances. Participants add the arms to the scissors kick for the sidestroke and will also start to learn the back crawl, breaststroke and butterfly and the basics of turning at the wall. *Prerequisite: Successful completion of Level 3.*



- ❖ Headfirst entry from the side in a compact position
- ❖ Headfirst entry from the side in a stride position
- ❖ Swim under water
- ❖ Feet-first surface dive, submerging completely
- ❖ Survival swimming
- ❖ Front crawl open turn
- ❖ Backstroke open turn
- ❖ Tread water using 2 different kicks (modified scissors, modified breaststroke, or rotary)
- ❖ Front crawl
- ❖ Breaststroke
- ❖ Butterfly
- ❖ Push off in a streamlined position on back and begin flutter kicking
- ❖ Push off in a streamlined position on back and begin dolphin kicking
- ❖ Elementary backstroke
- ❖ Back crawl
- ❖ Sidestroke
- ❖ Safety topics

Exit Skills Assessment:

1. Perform a feet first entry into deep water, swim front crawl for 25 yards, change direction and position as necessary and swim elementary backstroke for 25 yards.
2. Swim breaststroke for 15 yards, change direction and position as necessary and swim back crawl for 15 yards.



Learn-to-Swim Level 5 (Swordfish): Stroke Refinement. Ages 6yrs+

The objectives of Level 5 are to refine performance of all strokes (front crawl, back crawl, butterfly, breaststroke, elementary backstroke and sidestroke) and increase their distance. Introduction of flip turns. *Prerequisite: Successful completion of Level 4.*

- ❖ Shallow-angle dive from the side (in water at least 9 ft. deep)
- ❖ Shallow-angle dive, glide 2 body lengths and begin any front stroke (in water at least 9 ft. deep)
- ❖ Tuck surface dive, submerging completely
- ❖ Pike surface dive, submerging completely
- ❖ Front flip turn while swimming
- ❖ Backstroke flip turn while swimming
- ❖ Tread water, 5 minutes
- ❖ Front Crawl, 50 yards
- ❖ Breaststroke, 25 yards
- ❖ Butterfly, 25 yards
- ❖ Elementary Backstroke, 50 yards
- ❖ Back Crawl, 25 yards
- ❖ Standard Scull, 30 seconds
- ❖ Sidestroke, 25 yards
- ❖ Safety topics

Exit Skills Assessment:

1. Perform a shallow-angle dive into deep water, swim front crawl for 50 yards, change direction and position of travel as necessary and swim elementary backstroke for 50 yards.
2. Swim breaststroke for 25 yards, change direction and position of travel as necessary and swim back crawl for 25 yards.



Frequently Asked Questions about Swim Lessons

Q: What causes fear of the water?

A: Some of the more common causes of early fear of the water have to do with the way parents or caretakers relate to their children in and around water. These causes include:

- Being raised by parents or caretakers who are afraid of the water and have either knowingly or unknowingly communicated this fear to their children;
- Being raised in an environment that prevents childhood water play, whether as a result of lack of opportunity or parental actions;
- Being forced into water activities beyond the ability or comfort level;
- Being carelessly handled in water experiences;
- Being involved in or witnessing a traumatic water accident; or
- Having a fear of the unknown or a great fear of new experiences.

Q: What helps prevent fear of the water?

A: No matter how cautious you are, fear cannot always be prevented. You can help reduce fear in the following ways:

- Provide enjoyable non-threatening water activities that are simple and fun to build confidence and success.
- Arrange for regular, continued contact with a water environment for your child.
- Select safe water environments and supervise all water play.
- Treat water mishaps sympathetically, but do not alarm your child.
- Be aware of your facial expressions and choice of words so that you do not signal panic or fear.
- Lead by example. Follow the rules and enjoy the water with your child. Get your face wet and perform some of the simple and fun activities in the program.

Q: What if my child already has a fear of the water?

A: Respect your child's feelings. Teasing or getting angry only makes matters worse. Progress slowly by following these guidelines:

- Provide plenty of time for your child to adjust to the new settings.
- Concentrate on activities with which your child is comfortable and ready.
- Expose your child to other children who are having fun.
- Enjoy the water yourself with your child.

Q: How many lessons is it going to take for my child to "swim"?

A: Children vary widely when it comes to learning a skill. In general, each child's readiness is influenced by physical development, previous experiences, home environment, parental attitudes, and individual preferences. For most skills, there are

simple prerequisites, activities, and lead-ups that can prepare the child to perform these skills. For example, before children are ready to put their entire face in the water; they may need to practice blowing bubbles, washing the face, splashing, and putting parts of the face in the water. It may take 30-80 lessons before a child can swim independently.

Q: What if my child cannot keep up with the class?

A: The progress of your child is not compared with that of any other child. Because they have different experiences and backgrounds as well as different learning rates, children acquire skills at different times. The instructor can adapt and adjust the level of difficulty to the individual child. This way, your child will feel apart of the group, but will practice at his or her level. If you believe that your child needs to be in a different level class, consult with the instructor.

Q: What can I do to help?

A: You will be taking the first step by enrolling your child in swim lessons. You need to have your child attend class on a regular basis, work together with the instructor and take time for other practice and water play opportunities outside the program.

Q: How many levels should my child complete?

A: Your child should complete all of the Learn-to-Swim levels to develop full swimming competency. A child who has only completed level 4 or 5 may have acquired just the basic skills for swimming. It may take several seasons for a child to successfully complete all levels. If he or she swims only during the summer months, skills will be diminished. Regular practice is necessary to keep skills and progress to the next level.

Q: Will my child be “drown-proof” after participating in the Learn-to-Swim program?

A: Participation in any swimming lesson program does not “drown-proof” your child. It is only the first step in developing your child’s water safety and swimming skills. Year-round practice, regular exposure to water, and positive encouragement are the tools needed for developing your child’s comfort level in water and improving his or her swimming abilities.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN OUR PROGRAM!